



**Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments
Montgomery County Council
September 20, 2022**

Position: Oppose

Background: Bill 18-22 would prohibit the sale and eventually the use of gasoline-powered leaf removal equipment.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Association has concerns about Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments. The proposed ban deadlines on the sale and use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers would be burdensome to consumers and lawncare companies living and working in Montgomery County.

At this time, the EPA is in the third phase of pollutant controls for small engine-powered equipment, resulting in up to 90% reductions in exhaust gas and evaporative emissions from previously unregulated machines. Many believe outdoor power equipment is unregulated, but that is not true and equipment in this space has drastically changed in recent decades. In 2021, the majority of handheld products including leaf blowers are zero emission equipment and 80% of all product shipments were electricity-powered devices.

As the market is clearly already transitioning away from gas-powered equipment, we believe that consumers should be allowed to continue to use the equipment they already own until it needs to be replaced, rather than forcing a ban by a specific date. We understand that the bill as written includes a County-sponsored rebate program for equipment replacement, but without the inclusion of more details like specific dollar amounts, it is impossible to say whether the program will be sufficient to cover the costs forced onto consumers by the County.

We would urge the County Council to allow the market to continue its current trajectory towards “greener” equipment at a natural pace without imposing bans and deadlines on the community. Thank you for your consideration.